



Patricia A. Gaughan
Chief Judge

United States District Court

Northern District of Ohio
801 West Superior Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44113-1835

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Dear Litigant,

The United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio provides litigants with several options to assist them to achieve a fair and speedy resolution of their disputes. One important option is the opportunity to consent to the trial jurisdiction of the experienced magistrate judge assigned to your case.

A magistrate judge may conduct any or all proceedings, including trial, in a jury or nonjury civil matter and order the entry of judgment upon the consent of the parties (28 U.S.C. §636(c)). Because they do not hear criminal felony matters, they may have more flexibility in scheduling.

Consent to the magistrate judge need not add any additional steps to the litigation process. Appeals upon judgments in a case disposed of by a magistrate judge on consent of the parties must be taken directly to the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit (Local Rule 73.2).

Litigants give consent to the trial jurisdiction of a specific magistrate judge, not to magistrate judges in general (Local Rule 73.1 (b)). Where the litigants have consented to the trial jurisdiction of a magistrate judge and that magistrate judge is no longer able to work on the case, the case will be returned to the assigned Article III Judge and the parties may consent or refuse to consent to the trial jurisdiction of any magistrate judge subsequently assigned to the case. Litigants who wish to consent to the trial jurisdiction of the magistrate judge assigned to their case should complete the enclosed Consent to Exercise of Jurisdiction by a United States Magistrate Judge and Order of Reference form. Please note that the form requires all parties to signify their consent.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patricia A. Gaughan", is written over a horizontal line.

Patricia A. Gaughan
Chief Judge

attachments